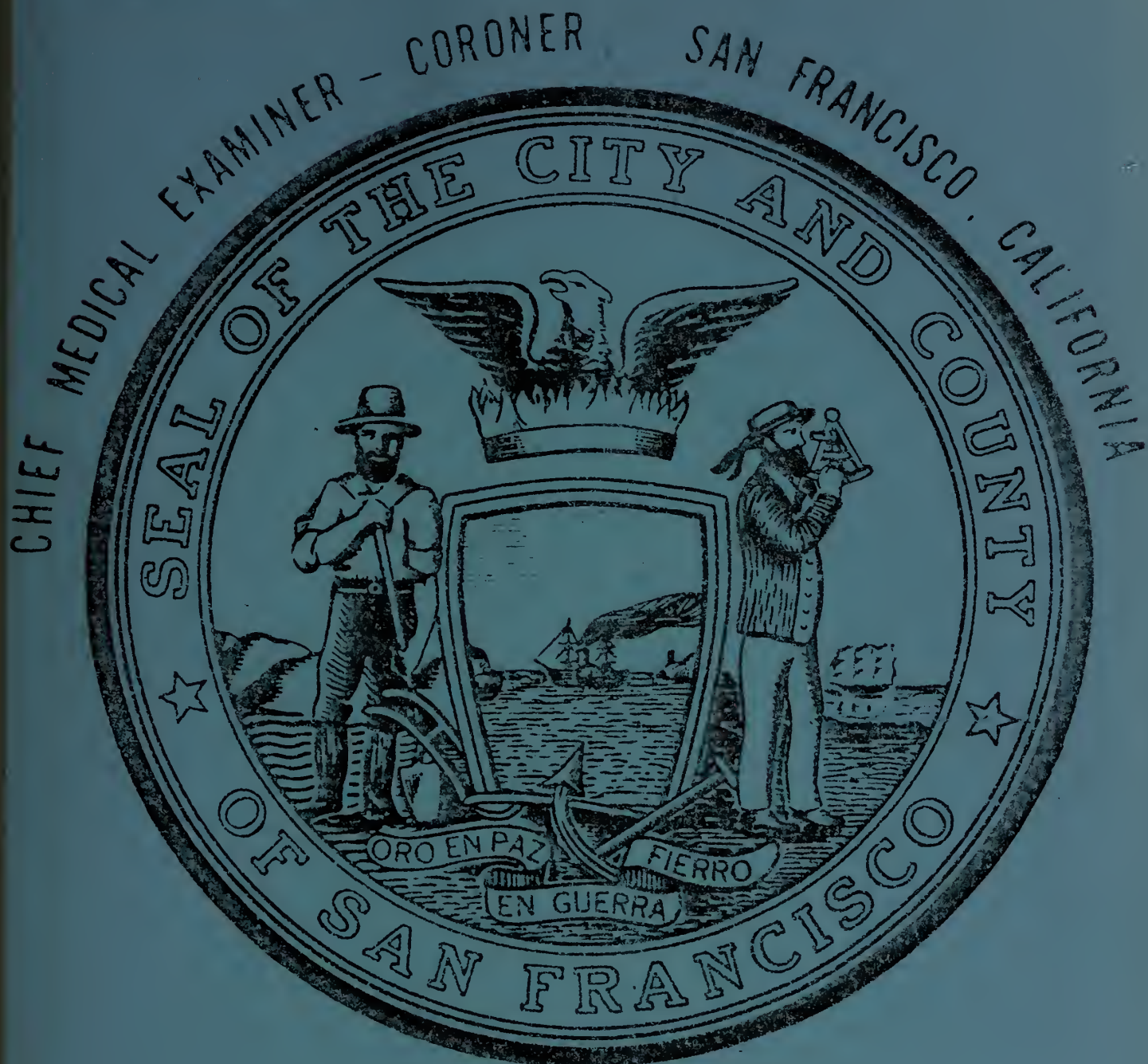




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ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 1973 - June 30, 1974

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1973-74

ROYD G. STEPHENS, M.D.  
10th & Bryant Streets  
San Francisco, California

94103

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*San Francisco Public Library*

Government Information Center  
San Francisco Public Library  
100 Larkin Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**REFERENCE BOOK**

*Not to be taken from the library*

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OFFICE OF THE  
CORONER

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Hall of Justice  
7th and Bryant Streets  
San Francisco, California 94103

TELEPHONE  
553-1694

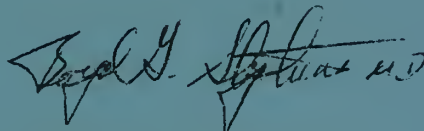
HONORABLE MAYOR AND BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
City and County of San Francisco  
City Hall - Civic Center  
San Francisco, California 94102

His Honor, The Mayor and Honorable Supervisors:

There have been many changes in our society over the past year. Costs and crime have risen throughout the nation. The demands made on this office for detailed investigation and resolution of the factors surrounding the death of any individual in the community increase with each passing day. To meet these demands requires the continued concern and devotion to duty felt by each individual in this office.

Our duty is to serve - through the careful, unbiased investigation of death; presentation to the judicial system, protection of public health; and continued education for the medical and judicial systems. Each of us is honored to serve.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Boyd G. Stephens", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Boyd G. Stephens, M.D.  
Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner

BGS:rm



CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER-CORONER

ADMINISTRATIVE CORONER

3 Physician  
Specialists

1 Senior Physician  
Specialist

1 Toxicologist

10 Coroner's  
Investigators

1 Coroner's Estate  
Investigator

1 Senior Clerk  
Typist

1 Medical Clerk  
Stenographer

3 Medical Trans-  
criber Typists

1 Assistant  
Toxicologist

2 Medical  
Technologists

3-1/4 Senior Morgue  
Attendants

1 Court Reporter





DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

ALKALOID OF MORPHINE GROUP	The substance identified following an injection of morphine, heroin, etc.
ELIM. (ELIMINATED)	Indicates deceased lived long enough after injury to have eliminated all toxic agents from his body.
MODE OF DEATH	Indicates the manner of death, such as natural, accident, suicide or homicide, and is to be distinguished from cause of death which is purely a medical determination.
MULTIPLE VEHICLE	More than one vehicle involved.
SINGLE VEHICLE	Vehicle struck pole, wall, divider, etc. without the influence of another vehicle.
NON-TRAFFIC	Accident occurred off the street in driveway, garage, etc.
MODE UNKNOWN	Circumstances totally unknown as when only bones are found or when no medical cause of death is determined, or when it cannot be said whether natural or accident as when an elderly person dies some time after a fractured hip.
MODE EQUIVOCAL	As, for example, when it cannot be decided whether death was suicide or accident or, for example, accident versus homicide.





OFFICE OF THE CORONER

The Coroner is a county officer charged with the responsibility of investigating certain deaths, acting under authority of provisions of the California Penal Code, the Government Code, and the Health and Safety Code. In San Francisco the position requires a physician with advanced training in the special area of pathology.

Any death reported to the coroner shall be subject to a preliminary inquiry which shall be properly recorded, after which the coroner will proceed with a full investigation if the circumstances warrant. If, from the preliminary investigation, the case does not prove to fall within the coroner's jurisdiction, he will so advise the physician in attendance. Cases falling under the coroner's jurisdiction will be fully investigated at the scene of death and, where warranted, undergo a complete forensic autopsy with toxicological examination. Accordingly, "reportable cases" are to be distinguished from "coroner's cases". While the duty to report certain cases continues, the decision on whether there shall be a full investigation rests with the coroner.

It is the legal duty of any person having knowledge thereof to report to the coroner any death which falls into the classes herein listed. This duty applies equally to physicians, hospital house officers, morticians, embalmers, ambulance attendants, police officers, nurses, as well as lay persons.

The coroner is legally obligated to show the cause of death and, when trauma or criminality is involved, the degree of extent of injuries. This information is then prepared and presented as expert medico-legal testimony for prosecution or defense in legal proceedings.

Deaths required by law to be reported to the coroner:

1. Homicide - Known or suspected
2. Suicide - Known or suspected
3. Accident) (Whether the accident or injury is the
4. Injury ) primary cause or only contributory;
- ) whether the accident or injury occurred
- ) immediately or remotely to the death.)
5. Grounds to suspect that the death occurred in any degree from a criminal act.
6. No physician in attendance.
7. In the continued absence of the physician (not having seen the patient in the 20 days prior to death).
8. Physician unable to state the cause of death. (The physician must be genuinely unable and not merely unwilling).
9. Poisoning (food, chemical, drug, therapeutic agents).



10. Occupational or industrial deaths.
11. All deaths in operating rooms
12. All deaths where a patient has not fully recovered from an anesthetic, whether in surgery, recovery room or elsewhere.
13. All solitary deaths.
14. All deaths in which the patient is comatose throughout the period of the physician's attendance.
15. All deaths of unidentified persons.
16. Deaths in prison or while under sentence.
17. Known or suspected contagious disease and constituting a public hazard.
18. It is suggested that patients under medical care less than 24 hours prior to death be reported to the coroner.

The Coroner's Office is divided into the following departments:

1. The Autopsy Department is staffed by three pathologists (board certified physicians) who work part time. Each is recognized as an expert in forensic pathology. They performed 2285 autopsies during the fiscal year. Autopsies are performed twice a day, seven days a week. The autopsy surgeons are assisted by three full-time and one part-time morgue attendants who also prepare and deliver the bodies to the morticians and maintain the premises of the autopsy department. These pathologists made approximately 350 appearances in court and before the Grand Jury as part of their duties. They also held approximately 510 consultations with assistant district attorneys and homicide investigators.
2. The Pathology Department has one part-time senior pathologist and two full-time technologists. There were 1140 cases referred to this department. There were 2551 microscopic slides made from 6870 portions of tissue from some 2121 various organs. There were 601 special stains used in the microscopic examinations. 101 ABO, Rh<sub>0</sub> blood groupings were done, as were 137 special chemical determinations.
3. The Toxicology Department has one part-time toxicologist and one full-time assistant toxicologist. There were 2292 cases referred to this department and 14,100 individual tests performed. Because of the increasing problems relating to drug use in our society, there has been a marked increase in the work load of this department. A considerable amount of time is utilized in courtroom testimony and consultation with judicial representatives.
4. Investigative Department There are ten coroner's investigators who staff the department in two-man crews 24 hours per day. Only one ambulance, with its two-man crew, is available each eight hour shift to investigate all reported deaths in the city. This crew responds to the scene of each reported death which potentially falls within the



coroner's jurisdiction. Last year, approximately 5,100 such trips were made. At each scene, these trained investigators reviewed the evidence, interviewed witnesses and searched the place of death for evidence of valuable property. 1490 additional deaths were reported and, after an initial investigation, found suitable for certification by the family physician rather than falling under the jurisdiction of the coroner.

5. Legal Department There is one certified court reporter on a part-time basis. The transcribing of testimony of witnesses at inquests and the sale of the transcripts is in accord with the provisions of the Government Code of Counties.
6. Clerical staff This department includes one medical clerk stenographer, one senior clerk and three medical transcriber typists. The Coroner's Estate Investigator has the responsibility of verifying the inventories property of the deceased, determining the legal next of kin and to deposit all cash or distribute the property to the rightful recipients as outlined in the Probate Code. This includes the handling and interpretation of wills, letters, etc.



FISCAL YEAR 1973-74

Total deaths in County	8770
Total deaths reported to Coroner	3775
Cases reported, investigated and cleared by the Coroner for physician's signature	1490
Coroner's Cases	2285

Percent of all deaths in San Francisco  
County reported to Coroner 43%

Percent of all County deaths having  
Coroner's autopsies 26%

Cases accepted by Coroner	2285
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1. Natural deaths	1514
2. Accidents	336
3. Suicides	220
4. Homicides	137
5. Mode equivocal	10
6. Cause unknown	29
7. Cause undetermined	39

Autopsies performed	2285
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Autopsy Index	100%
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Burials authorized by Coroner	234
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1. Indigents and fetuses buried by City	157
2. Veterans buried by funeral homes on rotation basis	33
3. Cases buried by funeral homes on rotation basis with Public Administrator controlled funds	44

Inquests

1. Inquests held	17
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Identification

1. Persons brought to Coroner's Office with insufficient identification	246
2. Persons subsequently identified by fingerprints, dental x-ray or other means	238
3. Persons buried as unidentified	8
4. Fingerprints taken and forwarded to F.B.I. California C.I.I. or S.F. Police Department	2101



ABUSE DRUGS

Barbiturates:        68

Accidents.....8  
Suicides.....47  
Equivocal.....13

68 deaths were where barbiturates were the sole cause or were in significant combination with other drugs or alcohol.

Heroin:

1 July '73 to 31 Dec. '73 = 16

1 Jan. '74 to 30 June '74 = 41                      57

This figure reflects lethal levels of alkaloid of morphine group which is the metabolic result of injecting heroin. They are cases where heroin was considered to be the primary culprit although a combination of drugs may have been found. They do not reflect all drug oriented deaths where the deceased may have been under the influence of "hard" narcotics at the time of injury.

Other "hard" narcotics.....7

Suspected, but unconfirmed "hard" narcotics..6

Heroin or its metabolic derivative were found in 13 other cases, but were not considered the proximate cause of death.

Heroin Age Breakdown:

Under							Over		
21	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	50	Male	Female
8	20	9	8	5	2	0	5	38	19



# VIOLENT DEATHS

There were 2285 cases brought to the Coroner's Office and autopsied. Of these cases, 746 were determined to be due to violence, or that some trauma was involved.

Mode	Total No.	% of Total Coroner's Cases	% of Total County Deaths (8770)
Accident	338	14%	4%
Motor Vehicle ( 82)			
At Home (129)			
Away from Home (119)			
Industrial ( 8)			
Suicide	220	9.6%	2.5%
Homicide	137	5.9%	1.5%'
Other Violent Deaths of Mode Equivocal or undetermined	51	2.2%	.05%

## Accident - Vehicle

Total number of vehicular deaths 82

### Auto and Motorcycle

80

### Other

2

## Ages in Vehicular Deaths

Under 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	Over 70
20	16	5	8	9	11	13

## Intoxicants and Vehicular Deaths

<u>Alcohol</u>			<u>Sex</u>	
Pos.	Neg.	Elim.*	Male	Female
19	23	38	52	28

\*Hospitalized long enough that any toxic agent, if present, would have been eliminated. Therefore, we cannot determine, at autopsy, whether alcohol or drugs was or was not involved.





YEAR	REFERRED TO TOXICOLOGISTS	SPECIMENS ANALYZED	SEPARATE TESTS PERFORMED	EXAMINATIONS	TESTED	POS.	NEG.	TESTED	POS.	NEG.
1973				7	170	38	132	172	8	164
JULY	172	210	452							
AUG	166	190	429	19	166	21	145	166	8	158
SEPT	183	217	485	22	177	34	143	183	6	177
OCT	182	226	506	40	182	38	144	182	8	174
NOV	192	223	501	10	192	32	160	192	8	184
DEC	202	258	579	10	202	38	164	202	14	188
1974										
JAN	221	259	557	9	221	44	177	221	6	215
FEB	155	179	375	3	155	34	121	155	6	149
MAR	210	259	568	4	210	42	168	210	3	207
APR	214	266	598	1	210	31	179	214	12	202
MAY	199	228	502	6	198	28	170	199	4	195
JUNE	196	228	527	6	195	34	161	196	6	190
TOTALS	2292	2743	6079	137	2278	414	1864	2292	89	2203



TOXICOLOGY

July 1973 - June 1974

Incidence of various drugs or poisons found singly or in combination:

These are not necessarily the cause of death or even a contributing cause. These figures reflect toxic agents present in the body to any degree. Any one case may have more than one drug or poison.

Acetone	5	Imipramine (Tofranil)	1
Alkaloid of		Isoniazid	1
morphine group	76	Lidocaine (Xylocaine)	1
Amitriptyline (Elavil)	2	Lithium	1
Amphetamine	4	Meperidine (Demerol)	1
Anticholinesterase agent	1	Meprobamate	1
Arsenic	1	Methadone	5
Barbiturate		Methamphetamine	5
Amobarbital	17	Methaqualone (Quaalude)	1
Pentobarbital	31	Methylenedioxymphetamine (MDA)	1
Phenobarbital	30	Methyprylon (Nodludar)	1
Secobarbital	33	Mysoline (Primidone)	1
Talbutal	1	Nicotine	1
Carbon Monoxide	25	Oxycodone (Percodan)	1
Carisoprodol (Soma)	1	Para-methoxyamphetamine (PMA)	1
Chloral Hydrate	5	Phenothiazine (Promethazine)	1
Chlordiazepoxide (Librium)	5	Propoxyphene (Darvon)	12
Chloroform	1	Salicylates	8
Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)	4	Thioridazine (Mellaril)	3
Cocaine	1	Thiothixene (Navane)	1
Codeine	13		
Cyanide	1		
Diazepam (Valium)	18		
Diphenylhydantoin			
(Dilantin)	3		
Disulfiram (Antabuse)	1		
Doxepin (Sinequan)	1		
Ethchlorvynol (Placidyl)	1		
Flurazepam (Dalmane)	3		
Glutethimide (Doriden)	4		
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	2		



UNIT COST

TOTAL BUDGET: \$552,332.

ADMINISTRATION

1	Coroner		
	Unit Cost	(3775 cases)	\$34,072
			<u>\$ 9.00 per case</u>

INVESTIGATION

Including removal, transportation and care of bodies

1	Asst. Coroner, Adm.	\$	16,939	
10	Coroner's Investigators		132,519	
	Overtime		2,792	
	Holidays		6,703	
	Vacation and sick relief		17,465	
	Maintenance of autos		4,319	
	Telephone directory service		140	
	Tires and tubes		265	
	Gasoline		1,302	
	Laundry		600	
	Cleaning equipment supplies		248	
	Sheets		688	
	TOTAL	\$	183,980	<u>\$48.73 per case</u>

(For 3775 cases investigated)

CLERICAL

1	Estate Investigator	\$	11,099	
1	Medical Clerk Stenographer		10,205	
1	Senior Clerk Typist		9,438	
3	Med. Transcriber Typists		24,600	
	Holidays		2,139	
	Vacation and sick relief		368	
	Maintenance and repair office equipment		271	
	Postage		560	
	Stationary and stationary withdrawals		2,780	
	TOTAL	\$	61,460	<u>\$16.28 per case</u>

SCIENTIFIC - AUTOPSY (2285 cases autopsied)\*

3	Physician specialists, part-time	\$	64,994	
3½	Morgue attendants		36,823	
	Vacation and sick relief		7,659.	
	Holidays		859	
	TOTAL	\$	110,335	<u>\$48.33 per autopsy</u>

\*Includes all appearances in court and grand jury and consultations with district attorneys and homicide inspectors before court appearances.



SCIENTIFIC - TOXICOLOGY (2285 cases referred)\*

1 Toxicologist (part-time)	\$	20,632	
1 Assistant Toxicologist		16,718	
Vacation relief		265	
Maintenance of Lab. equipment		202	
Toxicology supplies		1,450	
TOTAL	\$	39,265	<u>\$17.61 per case</u>

\*For 10,500 individual tests for alcohol, barbiturates, narcotics etc., includes all appearances in court and grand jury and consultation with district attorneys and homicide inspectors before court appearances.

SCIENTIFIC - PATHOLOGY (1220 cases referred)\*

1 Pathologist (part-time)	\$	22,737	
2 Technologists		26,624	
Holidays		517	
Vacation and sick relief		3,576	
Maintenance of Lab. equipment		202	
Pathology supplies		3,250	
TOTAL	\$	56,906	<u>\$46.65 per case</u>

\*For 8,050 tests of tissues, body fluids etc., for both microscopic and laboratory study. Includes all appearances in court and grand jury and consultation with district attorneys and homicide inspectors before court appearances.

LEGAL

1 Court reporter (part-time)	\$	7,046	
TOTAL	\$	7,046	<u>\$120.43 per inquest</u>







